



STATE OF MICHIGAN

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Sen. Kuipers, Rep. Newell propose allowing direct drug discounts

LANSING — Sen. Wayne Kuipers, R-Holland, and Rep. Gary Newell, R-Saranac, introduced bills Tuesday that would give consumers another way to help reduce their drug costs.

The proposed bills would allow Michigan consumers to receive direct rebates or discounts from drug manufacturers or distributors.

“Medicines cost enough already without the state of Michigan preventing consumers from saving every dollar they can,” Kuipers said. “This effort makes a common-sense change to state law.”

An attorney general’s opinion in October said such rebates or discounts can be seen as illegal kickbacks. The attorney general advised lawmakers to change and clarify the laws governing such rebates. Michigan is believed to be the only state that makes direct drug-manufacturer rebates and discounts illegal.

“It’s bizarre that Michigan law doesn’t allow consumers to take advantage of every discount or rebate offered,” Newell said. “If Michigan consumers can use rebates for cars and computers, they should be able to use them when buying medicine.”

State lawmakers started looking into the issue after a Michigan consumer was denied a \$10 rebate from a pharmaceutical company. The company said its offer was void in Michigan because of the kickback provisions of state law.

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